GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
ABSTRACT

HM&FW Department - Containment, Control, and Prevention of COVID-19 - The Epidemic Disease Act, 1897- Disaster Management Act, 2005 –"Unlock 5.0" Guidelines for Phased Reopening in the State of Andhra Pradesh – Opening of schools and other educational institutions – Certain guidelines - Issued.

HEALTH MEDICAL & FAMILY WELFARE (B2) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Rt.No:650 **Dated 01.11.2020**

Read the following:

1. G.O.Rt.No.390, HM&FW (B2) Dept., dt.7.9.2020.
2. G.O.Rt.No.433, HM&FW (B2) Dept., dt.5.10.2020.

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ORDER:

In the context of COVID-19, vide references 1st and 2nd cited opening of schools and other educational institutions were permitted subject to certain conditions. In continuation, it is decided to reopen the schools, junior colleges, training institutions and other educational institutions in a phased manner from 2nd November 2020. However, while conducting the academic and training activities, there is possibility of spread of infection amongst students and they may also infect the "elderly" and "high risk" family members at home, if adequate precaution is not taken. Hence, the following instructions, apart from those issued by Department of School Education, are issued to schools and other educational institutions in light of Covid-19 Management guidelines:

i. The in-house classes to the students of 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th standards (intermediate) shall be started from 2nd November 2020.

ii. Classes to the students of 6th, 7th and 8th standard shall be started from 23rd November, 2020.

iii. Classes to the primary students from 1st standards to 5th standard shall be started from 14th December 2020.

iv. However, online/ distance learning shall continue to be the preferred mode of teaching and shall be encouraged.

v. Where schools are conducting online classes, and some students prefer to attend online classes rather than physically attend school, they may be permitted to do so.

vi. Students may attend schools/ institutions only with the written consent of parents.

vii. For those students who do not wish to come to classes, necessary arrangements to make content available online and/or in the form of workbooks shall be made available. Teachers shall also be available on call/video call to answer any queries/doubts of such students opting for home study. Wherever possible online classes shall be made available with live classes or pre-recorded classes for such students.

viii. Children with old and co-morbid parents/grandparents at home shall be advised to stay home and not attend school. Children with co-morbidities shall also not attend school. Headmasters should personally monitor this aspect and under no circumstances this point should be overlooked.

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ix. Sick children should also be not permitted to schools.

x. To enable physical distancing, classes can be divided into various sections with not more than 20 students in each batch. These sections can have classes once in 2 days; or 3 days; or in different sessions in the morning and afternoon; or in rotation.

2. All covid protocols are to be followed by the schools with reference to wearing of mask at all times, hand hygiene and physical distance by students, faculty and staff. To enable this, the following SOPs must be followed strictly:

i. At the entry of the school, all the students, staff and faculty shall be examined for any symptoms and suspected persons be asked to return home and get themselves tested.

ii. Students and staff should be permitted to enter only with proper wearing of masks, maintenance of physical distance and hand sanitization.

iii. Seating arrangements in the class rooms and labs should be made in such a way that proper 6 feet physical distance is ensured.

iv. Sufficient ventilation must be there in classes with free airflow in the classrooms.

v. Hand sanitizers/soaps should be placed for frequent sanitization and students should be asked to practice and do hand washing (six steps) before and after meals and toilet use.

vi. Coughing etiquettes should be explained and coughing and sneezing should be in the tissue or into the elbow.

vii. Sharing of items like pens/pencils, erasers, books, water bottles, glasses, plates should be strictly prohibited.

viii. One period every day shall be dedicated to educate children on covid appropriate behaviour and on protecting the elderly and the high risk group. Students shall also be used as covid ambassadors to spread awareness to their parents on covid appropriate behavior.

ix. Importance of protecting the elderly (above 60 years) and the high risk (i.e. those with co morbidities like diabetes, kidney problem, asthma, blood pressure, hypertension, cardiac problems etc.) has to be particularly explained to the students. Therefore on reaching homes, students should wash hands mandatorily, keep distance from the elderly and the high risk as far as possible and also take bath and change clothes and only then enter home.

x. Mid-day meals shall be served in a staggered manner with different timings for each class/section/batch of students. While sitting for mid day meals, they shall be made to sit with adequate physical distance and no two students shall sit face to face.

xi. Assembly, library, group work, games and sports are not permitted until further orders.

xii. All the toilets should be cleaned with 1% sodium hypochlorite solution for every two hours. Adequate running water supply should be ensured to the toilets in the schools.

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xiii. Transport for school children shall be staggered class- wise/ sectionwise/batch- wise to ensure that school buses and school vans shall be filled only to half capacity. Use of autos and rickshaws for transport should be avoided and parents may be encouraged to bring children themselves where school buses and vans are not available.

xiv. At the closing of school, students should leave the school in staggered manner with 10 minute interval to each section and they should not be permitted to congregate outside the school. Similarly at the time of entry.

xv. The concept of "bubble" for each section has to be followed strictly as it is very effective in reducing the spread of infection. Thus, it has to be ensured that students of a section do not mix with students of another section. This is to be achieved by avoiding mixing at mid-day meal, entry time, exit time, transport, laboratory, play ground etc.

3. In order to ensure compliance of the above instructions and SOPs, the following mechanism will be established:

i. A School Level Task Force will be constituted with headmaster, two teachers and a student leader from each section to inculcate covid appropriate behavior among the students. This task force will also integrate elements of school health program and these two teachers will act as Health & wellness teacher Ambassadors and student leaders shall act as Health & wellness student Ambassadors. **A school level SOP shall be prepared for each school and shall be implemented**. All School Level Task Force details have to be shared with Mandal Level Taskforce/District Level Task Force.

ii. A Mandal Level Task Force will be constituted with Mandal Education Officer as chairperson and medical officers, MPDO, Municipal commissioner (in urban areas) and AE, RWS as members. This task force shall ensure the practice of covid appropriate behavior and testing as per sentinel surveillance systems for schools.

iii. District Level Task Force will be constituted with Joint Collector (Development) as Chairperson, District Education Officer as Vice-chairperson and DMHO, DPO, HQ Municipal Commissioner, and SE RWS as members. This task force shall monitor the practice of covid appropriate behavior in the schools. If any student or staff is found positive in any school the same shall be closed with immediate effect and all containment activities shall be implemented and reopened after proper sanitation is carried out.

iv. State Level Task Force will be constituted with Principal Secretary (HM&FW) as Chairperson, Principal Secy. (School Education) as Vice-Chairperson and concerned HODs as members, to ensure compliance of Covid appropriate behaviour in schools and educational institutions.

v. The Health and Surveillance Teams constituted as per G.O. Ms.No.224, HM&FW (B2) Dept. Dt. 31.3.2020, and G.O. Ms.No.229, HM&FW (B2) Dept. Dt. 3.4.2020 are fully involved in the management of COVID-19 and now in the context of opening of schools and other educational institutions, they shall conduct very active surveillance to detect spread of infection amongst teachers, staff, students and more so among the elderly and high risk family members of the students. It is important that the surveillance teams be very alert at this stage of the opening of schools.

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vi. IEC campaigns have been undertaken time and again to highlight different aspects of Covid appropriate behaviour. It is important that these IEC campaigns be continued to be conducted intensively in the context of the opening of schools and other educational institutions.

vii. Sentinel Surveillance will also have to be conducted and random testing is to be conducted for teachers, staff, students as per the detailed guidelines issued separately by the Health Department.

4. The above orders shall be followed without any deviations.

(BY THE ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF ANDHRA PRADESH)

NILAM SAWHNEY
CHIEF SECREATRY TO GOVERNMENT

To
The Collectors & District Magistrates
All the DM&HOs in the State
All DEOs in the State
All the District Panchayath officers in the State
All SE RWS in the State
Principal Secy., School Education
Director, School Education.
Commissioner, Intermediate Education
P.S to Minister (Education)
P.S to Dy. CM (HMFW&ME)
P.S. to Prl. Secy. to CM
P.S. to Chief Secretary.
P.S. to Prl. Secy. to Govt., HM&FW Deptt.
SC/SF

//FORWARDED : : BY ORDER//

SECTION OFFICER